

Take Advantage of Leftover Rice

Leftover rice is a bonus when you consider the different ways you can use it. Smart cooks have been adding it to soups and salads for years. They know it makes good nutritional sense and helps stretch the food dollar, too. And many families have their own version of "sweet rice," an old standby that usually consists of leftover rice heated with a little milk and butter and sprinkled with cinnamon and sugar. It still comes in handy as a quick, last-minute solution when someone asks, "What's for dessert?"

Our readers have demonstrated that cooked rice can be used in many other ways as well. For example, it's a main ingredient in Oriental Rice, a savory dish with ground chuck and Chinese vegetables. It helps round out the filling in Beef-Stuffed Peppers, a chili-flavored main dish that features ground beef and small curd cottage cheese.

Leftover rice has new possibilities as a side dish when it's combined with other ingredients. Spinach Rice is a delicious example; spinach and rice are baked with milk, eggs, cheese, and herbs in a flavorful casserole. Mexican Rice also cooks in the oven; it's a spicy blend of rice, green chiles, cumin, celery soup, sour cream, and two kinds of cheese.

Rice Pancakes are a good idea when you have just a little bit of rice left over. Stiffly beaten egg whites folded into the pancake batter make them surprisingly light. The rice adds a slight crunchiness as well as extra nutrition.

Think about Old-Fashioned Rice Pudding when you want a special dessert with a home-style touch. This version uses cooked rice and has a hint of lemon; buttered breadcrumbs are sprinkled on top before baking.

Cooked rice can be kept six to seven days in the refrigerator or frozen for up to four months. Use your imagination and come up with ideas for using this versa-



If you've got a couple of cups of cooked rice on hand, they can be the beginnings for Beef-Stuffed Peppers, a quick entrée that's packed with nutrition and good taste. Photographs: Charles Walton

tile ingredient. What started out as a leftover can easily become the base of tomorrow's menu.

BEEF-STUFFED PEPPERS

- 6 large green peppers
- 1 pound ground beef
- ½ cup diced onion
- 2 cups cooked rice
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ cup small curd cottage cheese
- ¼ cup chili sauce
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Cut off tops of green peppers; remove seeds. Cook peppers 5 minutes in boiling salted water; drain and set aside.

Cook ground beef and onion in a skillet until browned; drain well. Stir in next 7 ingredients. Stuff peppers with beef mixture. Place peppers in a 13- x 9- x 2-inch

baking dish, and pour water 1 inch deep into dish. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Yield: 6 servings.

*Claire Wash,
Greenwood, South Carolina.*

RICE PANCAKES

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 cup milk
- 2½ tablespoons vegetable oil
- ¾ cup cooked rice

Combine first 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Combine egg yolks, milk, and oil; stir into dry ingredients. Stir in rice, and set aside.

Beat egg whites (at room temperature) until stiff but not dry; gently fold beaten egg whites into batter.

For each pancake, pour about ¼ cup



Spinach Rice is an unusual side dish that's seasoned with thyme and rosemary.

batter onto a hot, lightly greased griddle. Turn pancakes when tops are covered with bubbles and edges are browned. Serve pancakes with syrup, if desired. Yield: 12 (4-inch) pancakes. *Martha Kubecka, Palacios, Texas.*

SPINACH RICE

- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 1 cup cooked rice
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup minced onion
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ teaspoon dried whole thyme
- ½ teaspoon dried whole rosemary leaves
- ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine

Drain thawed spinach, and squeeze out excess moisture between paper towels. Combine spinach and remaining ingredients except butter; mix well. Spoon

mixture into a greased 1-quart casserole; dot with butter. Bake at 350° for 25 to 30 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Yield: 4 servings.

Jane Noe, Sandia, Texas.

MEXICAN RICE

- 2 cups cooked rice
- 1 (10¼-ounce) can cream of celery soup, undiluted
- 1 (4-ounce) can chopped green chiles, drained
- ½ cup (2 ounces) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup (2 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- ½ cup commercial sour cream
- ¾ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- Additional shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

Combine first 8 ingredients; mix well. Spoon mixture into a greased 1½-quart baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 20 minutes. Top with cheese; bake an additional 5 minutes. Yield: 6 servings.

Deanne Anthony, Poteau, Oklahoma.

ORIENTAL RICE

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 pound ground chuck
- ¼ teaspoon garlic salt
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup shredded cabbage
- ¾ cup chopped green pepper
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1½ cups sliced carrots
- ½ pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 (5-ounce) can bamboo sprouts, drained
- 1 (5-ounce) can sliced water chestnuts, drained
- 2 cups cooked rice
- 1 (6-ounce) package frozen Chinese pea pods, thawed and drained

Heat oil in a large Dutch oven. Add ground chuck and garlic salt, and cook, stirring to crumble until meat is browned. Drain. Stir in next 10 ingredients; cover and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in rice and pea pods; simmer 5 minutes. Yield: 6 servings.

Joyce Petrochko, St. Albans, West Virginia.

OLD-FASHIONED RICE PUDDING

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1½ cups milk
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups cooked rice
- ⅓ cup raisins
- ½ teaspoon grated lemon rind
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons soft breadcrumbs
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted

Combine first 6 ingredients, mixing well. Stir in rice, raisins, lemon rind, and juice. Spoon into a lightly greased 1-quart baking dish. Combine breadcrumbs and butter; sprinkle breadcrumbs over top. Bake at 325° for 40 to 45 minutes or until set. Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

Irene Payne, Columbus, Georgia.

CURRIED RICE SALAD

- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen English peas
- 1½ cups cooked rice
- 1 cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup minced onion
- ½ cup mayonnaise or salad dressing
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- ¾ teaspoon curry powder

Cook peas according to package directions; drain. Cool.

Combine peas and remaining ingredients; mix well. Cover and chill 1 to 2 hours. Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

Mrs. Borden Gray, Sr., Snyder, Texas.